

2017/18 Strategic Innovation Grant Awardees

The Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry awarded 16 entities Strategic Innovation Grants to support the Commonwealth’s Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Combined State Plan. The grants support Governor Wolf’s vision of “jobs that pay, schools that teach, and government that works” by encouraging creativity and innovation in achieving one or more of the following goals for workforce development depicted in the WIOA Combined State Plan.

- Establish career pathways as the primary model for skill, credential and degree attainment, and provide all Pennsylvanians an opportunity to a job that pays.
- Expand the state’s pipeline of workers for targeted industry sectors from entry level skills to middle skills through Next Generation Industry Partnerships, Workforce Economic & Development Network of Pennsylvania (WEDnetPA), and other innovative strategies.
- Increase opportunities for all youth to participate in work-based learning through summer employment, pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, and other similar experiences.
- Engage employers directly to ensure we are closing the skills gap, and are able to more quickly upskill or reskill the workforce to meet the current and future needs.
- Strengthen data sharing across state agencies and workforce development partners to understand education and employment outcomes and more effectively evaluate our efforts.

Grants were awarded utilizing state Reemployment Fund resources. A list of grantees and brief summaries of their projects follow.

Applicant	Amount
Central PA Workforce Development Board	\$ 135,240.00
Chester County Workforce Development Board	\$ 246,000.00
Delaware County Workforce Development Board	\$ 200,539.92
Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board	\$ 122,883.01
Lehigh Valley Workforce Development Board	\$ 246,000.00
Northern Tier Workforce Development Board	\$ 149,919.17
Pocono Counties Workforce Development Board	\$ 220,905.00
South Central Workforce Development Board	\$ 295,000.00
South Central Workforce Development Board	\$ 252,000.00
South Central Workforce Development Board	\$ 239,964.90
Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board	\$ 203,863.86
Three Rivers Workforce Development Board	\$ 252,000.00
Three Rivers Workforce Development Board	\$ 190,926.34
Tri-County Workforce Development Board	\$ 252,000.00
West Central Workforce Development Board	\$ 221,400.00
Westmoreland/Fayette Workforce Development Board	\$ 252,000.00
TOTAL	\$3,480,642.20

Grantee: Central PA Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: Enhancing Client Engagement through Modern Communication and Outreach Tools

Amount Awarded: \$135,240.00

Location: Centre, Clinton, Columbia, Lycoming, Mifflin, Montour, Northumberland, Snyder, and Union counties

Project Summary: This program seeks to expand digital communication for the purpose of community engagement through four initiatives: an online regional Career Hub promoting work-based learning, a website for the region's CareerLink® offices, an update to the Central PA Workforce Development Corporation's website, and outreach materials.

Grantee: Chester County Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: High Priority Tech Targets

Amount Awarded: \$ 246,000.00

Location: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties

Project Summary: This program will address the needs of employers in the Technology, Energy/Construction, and Healthcare industries through the following: providing access to incumbent worker training to 155 workers within the technology and energy/construction sectors, increasing training opportunities for 35 students in healthcare, and identifying 10 women or minority students for tech internship opportunities.

Grantee: Delaware County Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: Strengthening High Demand Occupation Training

Amount Awarded: \$ 200,539.92

Location: Delaware and Chester counties

Project Summary: The goal of the project is to expand and improve career pathways and Allied Health programs by developing a seamless noncredit-to-credit educational pathway approach. Activities include curriculum revision, creating prior learning assessment instruments, developing an outreach plan, and implementing a pilot program in Medical Billing and Networking.

Grantee: Lackawanna County Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: Careers to Employment 2

Amount Awarded: \$ 122,883.01

Location: Lackawanna County

Project Summary: This program will enable the establishment of career pathway opportunities in response to the documented needs of local employers with the Healthcare/Life Sciences Industry sector through a comprehensive mix of services including pretraining orientation, occupational skills training, OTJ opportunities, and possible customized training initiatives. This is a continuation project.

Grantee: Lehigh Valley Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: Machining Training Program

Amount Awarded: \$ 246,000.00

Location: Lehigh and Northampton counties

Project Summary: The project's goal is to prepare program participants with skills essential for entry level machining positions for Lehigh Valley manufacturers. Objectives include 54 participants, a pool of vetted candidates, placement into full-time employment or continued training, positive relationships with employers, and teaching curriculum.

Grantee: Northern Tier Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: Fit4Work Reengagement

Amount Awarded: \$ 149,919.17

Location: Bradford, Sullivan, Susquehanna, Tioga, and Wyoming counties

Project Summary: This project helps individuals who have been disengaged from the workforce due to incarceration or other barriers to gain the skills and tools needed for successful employment. The program will assist in establishing a work history and developing foundational skills while also working with employers to meet their workforce needs.

Grantee: Pocono Counties Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: Medical Secretary Certificate

Amount Awarded: \$ 220,905.00

Location: Wayne, Pike, Monroe, and Carbon counties

Project Summary: This program includes development and implementation of a Medical Secretary Certificate Training Program focusing on target populations with barriers to employment, and providing placement into entry-level medical secretary positions. Curriculum will be based on employer needs. Remediation services will be available and career coaching will be provided.

Grantee: South Central Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: Employer-Based Career Pathway/Pipeline

Amount Awarded: \$ 295,000.00

Location: Adams, Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry counties

Project Summary: This project aims to expand the region's pipeline of workers for the healthcare industry sector and improve the overall quality of care at long-term care facilities through: pre-apprenticeship, apprenticeship, and other similar work-based learning experiences. The project also focuses on improving staff morale and job satisfaction to reduce turnover.

Grantee: South Central Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: West Shore Academy of Ag-Tech Career Development

Amount Awarded: \$ 252,000.00

Location: Cumberland and York counties

Project Summary: This program provides elementary, middle, and high school students enhanced opportunities for exposure and exploration of aquaponics and other agricultural technology as part of the district's STEM program. Grant funds will provide materials for use in the laboratory.

Grantee: South Central Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: Career Readiness School District Mini-Grants & Technical Support

Amount Awarded: \$ 239,964.90

Location: Statewide

Project Summary: This project provides the opportunity for school districts to apply to one of the 9 Intermediate Units for a mini-grant of \$5,000-\$10,000 focusing on career awareness and preparation, career acquisition, career retention and advancement, and entrepreneurship, with a planned impact of at least 45,000 students participating in a career-readiness experience.

Grantee: Southern Alleghenies Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: Case-Managed Reintegration: A Collaborative Approach

Amount Awarded: \$ 203,863.86

Location: Cambria, Bedford, and Blair

Project Summary: This program aims to provide intensive case management, workforce development services, and wraparound support to ex-offenders and to develop a reintegration plan that supports success. The plan is to serve 50 individuals through pre- and post-release services utilizing group sessions and intensive case management.

Grantee: Three Rivers Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: A. Philip Randolph Institute's Education Fund Career Pathways

Amount Awarded: \$ 252,000.00

Location: Allegheny county

Project Summary: This program seeks to prepare, train and place at least 30 low-income, primarily African-American, individuals in entry-level jobs in the construction trades and manufacturing sectors through: developing an 8-week certificate program with industry recognized certifications, solidifying support roles with community partners, enhancing recruitment/intake, employer identification, providing case management support, and more.

Grantee: Three Rivers Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: Smart Manufacturing and Advanced Robotics Technology Extended Reach (SMARTER)

Amount Awarded: \$ 190,926.34

Location: Allegheny county

Project Summary: This project focuses on low-income youth and other youth with barriers, and seeks to create a non-traditional pathway for students to earn industry-recognized credentials leading to further education, training, or work. The project will build the capacity of 5 workforce development partners serving young adults through training 10 case managers in occupational skills, and will also provide workforce skill training to 40 young adults.

Grantee: Tri-County Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: Promoting Manufacturing and Healthcare Careers Pathways

Amount Awarded: \$ 252,000.00

Location: Armstrong, Butler, Indiana, Lawrence, and Mercer

Project Summary: The project will promote manufacturing and healthcare career pathways in the community and provide Basic Industry Skills training (pre-apprenticeship) that leads to employment. The project will tie curriculum to employer-sector partnerships which will be responsible for evaluating career pathways that begins with basic skills training for entry-level employment to training for advanced positions.

Grantee: West Central Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: High School to High Skills: Youth Career Pathways in Targeted Industries

Amount Awarded: \$ 221,400.00

Location: Armstrong, Butler, Indiana, Lawrence, and Mercer

Project Summary: This project focuses on educating youth and young adults about in-demand occupations and career pathways through the following: 6 business and industry career fairs, 2 educator-in-the-workplace programs, and 30 paid work experiences in targeted industries.

Grantee: Westmoreland/Fayette Workforce Development Board

Grant Title: New Century Job Shop Pilot at New Century Careers

Amount Awarded: \$ 252,000.00

Location: Allegheny, Beaver, Greene, Washington, Fayette, Westmoreland, Butler, Armstrong, and Indiana counties

Project Summary: This program will provide controlled work experiences for individuals who have barriers to employment, create a larger pool of trained technicians for manufacturers, and assist SMEs by providing parts for production runs. This will include reinvention of the M2K curriculum.